

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee. My name is Kelly Flynn and rise in opposition to HB 314. I am a longtime rancher, outfitter and sportsperson from the Townsend area. My family has been fortunate to steward a ranch in the Townsend area for over 140 years. Fourteen years I was privileged to serve on the first Governor's Advisory Council on Private Land/ Public Wildlife in 1993 & 1994. That group as well as ensuing Private Land/ Public Wildlife Advisory Councils has been comprised of hard-working, thoughtful landowners, sportsfolks, outfitters, legislators, and Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Commission members.

Over the years, the Advisory Council has worked to solve problems by a consensus process that answers concerns for all the affected parties. . . . and suggests win-win solutions for all the groups. I feel that HB 314 circumvents this process of collaboration that attempts to find win-win solutions for all the groups.

I would like to point out the original language as stated in the final recommendations from that first Governor's Advisory Council on Private Lands/ Public Wildlife in December of 1994. The Governor's Statement of Purpose reads as follows:

A. The Private Lands/ Public Wildlife Advisory Council, working with representative local advisory groups shall define common goals, including but not limited to:

- 1) ACHIEVING OPTIMUM HUNTER ACCESS
- 2) PROTECTING WILDLIFE HABITAT
- 3) MINIMIZING IMPACTS ON AND
INCONVENIENCES TO LANDOWNERS
- 4) ENCOURAGING THE CONTINUANCE OF A
VIALE OUTFITTING INDUSTRY
- 5) PROVIDING ADDITIONAL TANGIBLE BENEFITS
TO LANDOWNERS WHO ALL HUNTER ACCESS

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B. Further, the Council, working with representative local advisory groups, shall advise the Governor, Legislature, Director of the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, and the FWP Commission on measures to address the above goals.

I would like to point out that within the INTRODUCTION for those draft recommendations that the Council acknowledged that there were many areas of disagreement – pro and con — on each recommendation. However, as the public considered the final draft, they asked that the public consider some important points. I will relate five of those considerations within that introduction :

1. The Council's responsibility to balance the interests of all parties with concerns regarding private-land and public wildlife issues.

2. The Council's work as a "total product", and understand that considerable give-and-take among various groups is a necessary component of this process.

3. That all interested parties need to be willing to accept change in order to benefit all the people in Montana who have an interest in Montana's hunting and wildlife heritage.

4. That there is no intent to diminish private property rights. Landowner participation on programs suggested within this draft is strictly voluntary.

5. The contributions that private landowners have made and continue to make to Montana's hunting and wildlife heritage. Private landowners sustain wildlife by providing much of the habitat. They support management of wildlife through the long-standing tradition of public access to private land for hunting. Hunters and landowners together have historically been, and continue to be, crucial links in Montana's wildlife chain.

I feel HB 314 raises an issue to a "confrontation" level and doesn't attempt to work through win-win solutions for landowners, sportsmen, and outfitters. I would suggest working out solutions through the Governor's Advisory Council on Private Lands/ Public Wildlife and coming back to the Legislature with a recommendation that provides win-win solutions for all the groups.

I urge you to vote no to HB 314. Thank you for your time!